

after moving on to the Officer's Staff as Press Secretary, First Vice President and Secretary Treasurer of the 16,000-member local for more than 20 years. He was a charter member and President of the Hunterdon-Warren Counties Central Labor Council for four years, after which he was elected President of the Monmouth-Ocean Counties Central Labor Council.

Some of the other responsibilities Steve Hornik holds or has held, representing labor, include: Chairman of the Rutgers University Trade Union Consulting Council, the Monmouth County Workforce Investment Board, United Way of Tri-State Board of Governors, and a Commissioner on the Governor's Employment and Training Commission. He is also on the Advisory Boards of Brookdale College, Monmouth University and is a member of the State Board of Arbitration and Mediation. He was previously on the Executive Board of the New Jersey Central and State Lung Associations, a Member of New Jersey Chief Justice Robert N. Wilentz's Courts Committee on Efficiency, the Private Industry Council, the Congressional Award Council and the Manalapan Democratic Club. He has been a member of numerous State and County screening committees, and was a delegate to four of the last five Democratic Conventions. He remains a County Committee Member, a position he has held for the last 35 years. He has been and continues to be active with the Knight of Columbus.

Steven Hornik is also a devoted family man. He and his wife Arline have four grown children and 10 grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I could go on and on, talking about my good friend Steve Hornik, citing his many accomplishments on behalf of working people and his many contributions to our community. At the testimonial in his honor later this month, many of these great accomplishments will be recounted, happy memories recalled and funny stories told. We will miss his hard work, his energy and his honest dedication to fighting for the interests of working people.

Mr. Speaker, labor unions have achieved many important victories over the years, fighting for safe working conditions, living wages, health care benefits and a dignified retirement. The battles fought and won by the labor movement have not only helped union members. America's broad-based economic growth, the expansion of the middle class, the existence of programs like Social Security and Medicare, and the realization of the American dream for tens of millions of families all owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to labor unions. These days, unions are under attack. But I believe public support is still strong. I know that the unions will continue to fight for such basic rights as universal health care coverage, increased pension security and fair trade agreements that protect American jobs. It's great leaders like Steve Hornik who have made, and continue to make, the union movement strong.

I regret that Steve Hornik will no longer be at the helm of the Monmouth-Ocean Central Labor Council. But I know that we will continue to benefit from his contributions to the ongoing fight for social and economic justice for working people. Steve Hornik has contributed to that fight more than anybody I know. The example that he set will guide us all for years to come.

#### TRIBUTE TO ISAAC DARKO

### HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, August 5, 1998*

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate and to pay tribute to Mr. Isaac Darko, a constituent of mine and a distinguished student at Columbia University in New York. He will be recognized for his academic and scientific achievements as a participant in the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Undergraduate Scholarship Program for Individuals from Disadvantaged Backgrounds (UGSP) on August 6, 1998.

Isaac graduated from the Health Professions and Human Services High School in 1997 and has just completed his freshman year at Columbia University. This summer he has been working at the NIH Department of Molecular Biology under the supervision of Dr. Alfred Johnson. He has been working on the epidermal growth factor receptor (EGFR), which is expressed in such cancers as breast and prostate cancer and in other cancer cell lines.

Mr. Speaker, the UGSP scholars search is highly competitive and nationwide. Currently, the program has 24 scholars from all over the nation, from institutions such as Columbia University, MIT, Harvard, Georgetown, U.C. Davis, and Stanford. In order to participate in the program, a Scholar must either have a 3.5 Grade Point Average or be in the top 5% of his/her class. Candidates must also demonstrate a commitment to pursuing careers in biomedical research and must be from a disadvantaged background. The current group is composed of 32% Hispanics, 32% African Americans, 21% Asians, 10% Caucasians, and 5% Native American, with a balance between the genders of 52% female and 48% male.

Mr. Speaker, being selected for this program indicates that Isaac has demonstrated that he has the ability and the desire to be an asset and a role model in our community. We are proud of his accomplishments and I know he is taking full advantage of the opportunity presented to him. He is a terrific example for future participants in this program and others like it.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Mr. Isaac Darko for his outstanding accomplishments and also in commending the National Institutes of Health Undergraduate Scholarship Program for Individuals from Disadvantaged Backgrounds for offering opportunities to students like Isaac.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. JO ANN EMERSON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, August 5, 1998*

Mrs. EMERSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to clarify my vote on Roll Call vote 384, Mr. BASS' amendment to the Commerce, State, Justice, and the Judiciary Appropriations bill. Yesterday, I inadvertently voted "nay" when I intended to vote "aye".

Mr. BASS' amendment would have transferred funds from the Advanced Technology

Program (ATP) to the Edward Byrne grant program at the Department of Justice, an effort which I strongly support. The Byrne grant program is a valuable tool for local law enforcement in the fight against the crime and drug problems that threaten our neighborhoods. I believe that scarce taxpayer dollars are better spent in this anti-crime program than in the "corporate welfare" ATP, which I have consistently opposed.

#### INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION TO ENSURE PROMPT CLAIM PAYMENT BY HEALTH PLANS

### HON. JIM McDERMOTT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, August 5, 1998*

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation that addresses the issue of prompt payment, that is, ensuring health plans reimburse providers in a timely manner.

Although there have been numerous horror stories of health plans withholding reimbursement from providers the issue of prompt claim payment has not been addressed during the managed care reform debate.

My view is that the prolonged delay of claim payments by health plans interferes with the doctor-patient relationship.

By delaying reimbursements to doctors, health plans are turning care-givers into bill collectors—forcing them to hound both the insurance company and the patient for reimbursements which, in most cases, should already have been paid by the plan.

Unnecessary reimbursement delays by health plans create unnecessary rifts between the patient and the provider—causing confusion with patients about their health insurance plan at a time when they are most vulnerable and possibly even distrust by the patient in the quality of their provider.

The attached article from the August 2, 1998 Washington Post elaborates with specific, real life examples of the above mentioned issues.

Medicare, Medicare+Choice, & Medicaid already have statutory language requiring prompt payment by its contractors. Yet, when President Clinton extended managed care protections to federal employee health plans, he did not include the prompt payment language in his executive order.

Because of federal inaction, some states have taken the lead in this area. Texas, Florida, Tennessee, New York, and New Jersey have stat laws requiring prompt payment. Similar bills have been introduced in Georgia, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont and Washington.

Most of the state laws appear stricter than the Medicare+Choice model I propose. For example, in addition to establishing clean claim payment guidelines, Texas requires strict time lines for plans when notifying a provider that a claim is being investigated. The plan must explain in writing why they reject a claim, and make payments in 5 business days after notifying claimants that their claim will be paid.

New York, home of the infamous Oxford Health Plan, has by far the strongest penalties for plans that fail to comply with their prompt payment laws. New York plans can be subject